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UNCLAS COLOMBO 001527

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STATE FOR SA/INS AND INR/B

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MALDIVES: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON FOREIGN  
SECRETARY ABDUL HAMEED ZAKARIYYA

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REF: COLOMBO 1470

1. As reported reftel, the Government of the Republic of Maldives announced the appointment of Abdul Hameed Zakariyya as Foreign Secretary on September 1. Biographic information on Zakariyya follows below.

2. Like many of his colleagues in the small Foreign Affairs Ministry with few overseas missions, Zakariyya has spent most of his career (all but 18 months out of 19 years) in Male'. He began at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1985 as an Assistant Undersecretary, progressing steadily to Assistant Director of External Resources (1989-1990) and Foreign Relations (1991-1992). From 1994-1998 he held the post of Director of Foreign Relations at the MFA. From 1998-1999 he worked abroad at the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) as a political affairs officer. He returned to Male' as the MFA's Director of International Affairs from 1999-2001. Zakariyya was promoted to the post of Director General of International Affairs in December 2001, a position he held until his appointment as Foreign Secretary on September 1.

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3. Zakariyya, who was born in Male' on November 11, 1955, graduated from the American University in Beirut in 1984 with a BA in Public Administration. He also holds a Certificate in Diploma Studies from the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva (1990-1991). He is a member of the Foreign Investment Board in the Ministry of Trade and Industries and Chairman of the Board of the Maldives Industrial Fisheries Company. Married with two sons, Zakariyya is an avid table tennis player.

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